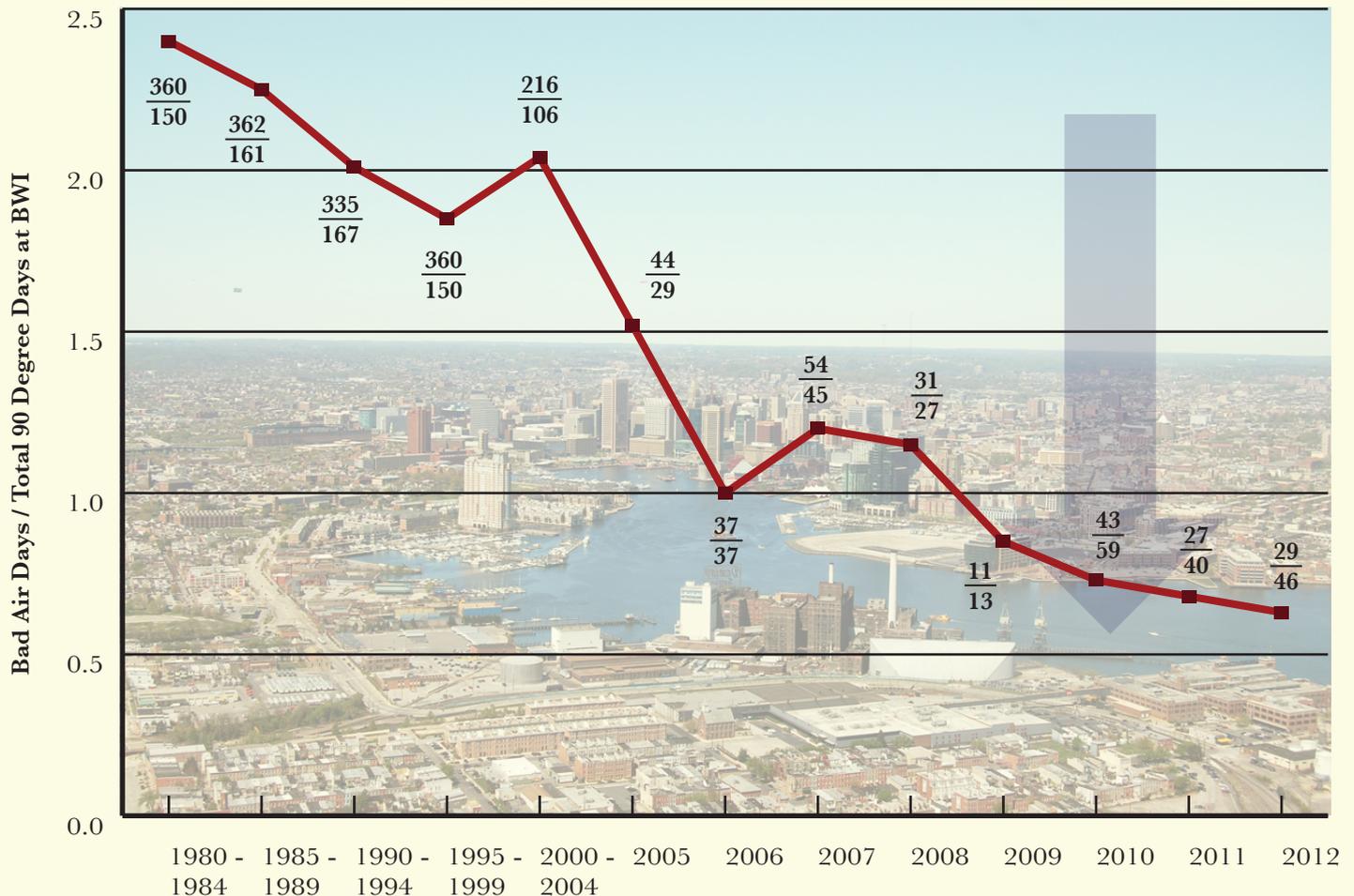


Bad air days per hot days drop



Hot weather is a significant factor in the formation of ground-level ozone, a pollutant that can cause health problems has been linked to premature death. The ratio of bad air days – when levels exceeded the federal standard for ozone -- to hot days has declined over the years in Maryland. Programs such as the Healthy Air Act have reduced emissions of the pollutants that, when cooked by the sun, can create ozone pollution.